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Yes, the right act
Is less, far less than the right-thinking mind.
Seek refuge in thy soul: have there thy heaven!
Scorn them that follow virtue for her gifts!
The mind of pure devotion—even here—
Casts equally aside good deeds and bad,
Passing above them. Unto pure devotion
Devote thyself: with perfect meditation
Comes perfect act, and the righted-hearted rise—
More certainly because they seek no gain—
Forth from the bands of body, step by step,
To highest seats of bliss.

Arnold's Bhagavad-Gita.

THE PATH.

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THEOSOPHY IN ITS PRACTICAL APPLICATION TO DAILY LIFE.

[A PAPER READ BEFORE THE ARYAN T.S. OF NEW YORK CITY BY ALEXANDER FULLERTON.]

"Theosophy in its Practical Application to Daily Life" is a topic capable of many different treatments. Of these we have had several, but one has not been touched upon at all. It is the application of Theosophy as explaining the facts we daily encounter; in other words, Doctrinal Theosophy as accounting for the phenomena around us. This is an application full of suggestion and worth.

I think that the more thoroughly a man is suffused with Theosophic conceptions, the more closely he is brought in touch with the life throbbing around him, and the quicker his perception of its many illustrations of Theosophic truth. As every effect must have had its cause, the most trivial

circumstance or event is not an accident ; and as Theosophy is a Universal Science, including all movement and all laws, there can be no problem for which it is without a solution. It explains why and how Cosmic Processes have evolved ; but it explains just as well why you were snappish over cold coffee, and how rarely you find a New York shoe-black who is not an Italian.

This is because Law is a universal presence. The old conception was that things generally went on at hap-hazard, there being a few reliable certainties such as Gravitation and the Sunrise, but that most other matters—the weather, the crops, business, civil government—had no fixed principles, and were to be regarded as fitful or accidental, before which one could only stand with folded hands and say with the Mahomedan, "God is Great." But scientific inquiry, much as the narrower school of Theosophists may deride it, has changed our whole conception of physical and social order, and has made possible for Theosophists that broad foundation of pervading Law, upon which our system must inevitably be built. It has pushed Law into all the areas from which Theology or Superstition had fought desperately to fence it out ; it has invaded every sanctum consecrated to caprice ; it has not spared Churches or Creeds or Bibles, but has shown how Law, in its Intellectual Department, accounts for and runs through them all ; and it has so woven its network of connections around all human and cosmic activity that there seems not a crevice through which may be thrust a casualty or a whim. Everybody is affected by the change. The Prayer against Comets has disappeared from the English Prayer Book, just as the Prayer for Rain will disappear from the American. Meteorology, a science yet in its infancy, is spreading disaster in orthodox circles. Life-Insurance Companies have done more to kill the ecclesiastical view of death than sermons have done to keep it alive. Vaccination and Boards of Health have been fatal to pious theories of pestilence. The discovery of a new bacillus is heard of with equanimity by the devout, and the statistical relation of revivals to panics hardly shocks the most sensitive disciple. So accustomed are we all, the godly and the profane, the churchman and the worldling, to reports of Law's continued march, that the conquest of a new territory excites no antagonism and hardly any surprise.

One consequence of this is that thoughtful people are never content to stop with phenomena ; they must think back to their causes. The scientific habit does not include only cosmic or geological changes, or even racial and social evolution ; it works upon classes, and groups, and individuals, seeking to know why such and such things are so, and why waves of impulse pass over a community or ripples sway one man. There *must* be some cause. The idea that all is to be accounted for as freak or casualty is swept aside with some little impatience, and then the eye is strained to pierce into

the background and catch the forces working there. Our prose Popes see well that "The proper study of mankind is man", and they are searching for all in climate or legislation or food or location which may explain character and ways. Every such exploration swells the stock of knowledge and gives means to the better understanding of national marks and individual peculiarities. Theosophists, no less than ethnologists and physiologists, are benefitted by these discoveries, and owe them the fullest thanks and praise. For it is not, you observe, the mere accretion of facts which is to be welcomed, but the consequent mental habit of inducing from them laws, the habit of sternly linking phenomena to causation. This is the habit indispensable to popular progress and therefore to general intelligence; still more is it the habit exacted at the very outposts of Theosophy.

The kind of development now taking place is therefore very cheering. It is an excellent preparation for fuller attainment. It clears away many moss-grown obstacles to thought; it breaks up stolid or stupid inherited beliefs; and it frames a mental edifice which is abundantly well-based, and yet which is light and airy, letting freely in the sunbeams and the breeze. Still, there is something lacking.

To say that secular science is defective in its methods and soon barred in its operations, seems a truism to educated Theosophists. They see at once that no system can be complete which rules out the whole realm of imponderable, invisible agencies, and that no investigation can be thorough which stops at the limit of matter. The *really* potent forces lie beyond. To say that there are no such forces, or that, whether there be or not, search for them shall be inhibited, cripples true science at the outset. And this, bad as it is in respect to questions of chemistry or physiology, becomes positively disastrous when applied to man as a thinking, feeling, aspiring creature. The largest section of the problem is left out, the very essence of the study formally obliterated. For, unless we know something of the life which throbs behind and flows through him, unless we have data as to his genesis and evolution and prospects, unless we perceive the relation of the individual to the nation and of the nation to the race, how are we to explain anything more than his anatomical structure and his pathological risks? How at all can we analyze what character means and is, or what is the significance of talent or goodness?

Now it is just at this point that Theosophy appears with its complement of knowledge. It does not at all reject those invaluable discoveries which tell of close scrutiny into Nature and of enormous conquests over her, but it gives the undiscovered facts without which all is inadequate or misleading, and with which all is harmonious and full. Starting with the doctrine of the One Life Source, it traces the flow and rise through inferior organisms till humanity is reached, and then explains the measure-

less diversity of races and nations and persons, accounting for the peculiarities exhibited and the courses pursued. Giving the history of a man behind him, it shows why he is thus and could not be otherwise ; and, taking his condition and nature as he is, it foretells the future which lies before him. The enigmas of rank and beauty and talent, and poverty and dulness and obscurity, all are solved. Mystery vanishes as facts appear and the law of causation is discerned. The clouds around human life roll away, and we see what is the meaning of existence and what the law of its advance. And all this is done, I need hardly say, by uplifting the two doctrines of Reincarnation and Karma.

Let us suppose, now, a thinker of average power, in tune with the prevalent conception of Law, but with the added advantage of fair familiarity with Theosophic Teachings. He is looking calmly at the currents of life around him, and at the incidents which constitute his own daily career. He wishes to apply Theosophy practically as a solvent of all questions, however small. Taking his nation roughly as a whole, he very likely notices that certain great movements occur to it more or less periodically. A wave of interest—political, religious, secular—sweeps through it from end to end. Like the recent influenza, which went irresistibly over the land, throttling nearly every one with a simultaneous grip, yet an unseen, unseizable power which mysteriously came, abode for a while, and then as mysteriously disappeared ; so some strange popular impulse makes itself manifest everywhere, eludes scientific exposure, and then vanishes, to be felt no more for years. A good illustration is the case of commercial panics followed by religious "revivals". About every 10 years the failure of a bank or a firm, things common enough at other times, starts a palpitation which disquiets the whole commercial world. There is a stampede to the Exchange, stocks are sold off at ruinous rates, Trust Companies and business houses tumble to pieces, and a wail of despair arises in every village. Nobody can explain it, though the economists and the newspapers attempt to with phrases like "over-production" or "want of confidence". Hardly has the convulsion ceased and affairs begun to settle down when a new thrill is felt in the community. A "revival of religion" begins. Moodeys and Sankeys appear, the business-men's daily prayer-meeting is re-established, the churches are crowded, testimonies and experiences and conversions multiply, interest in the next world displaces interest in this. But in time the force dies down, the meetings dwindle, and the "revival" ends. The orthodox rejoice at having had "an outpouring of the Spirit" ; the profane say simply "hysteria".

Evidently, however, neither of these explanations meets the case. The "Spirit" does not prompt to absurd doctrines or to unintelligent twaddle ; and "hysteria" is powerless against those who are not hysterical. If there

is any adequate cause for so widespread a phenomenon, it must be in a region no less diffused and of a power no less efficient. "Exactly so", says the Theosophist, "and we may find it on the psychic plane. Therein lie potencies and impulses and movements abundantly able to produce the largest social crises. We do not as yet understand their nature, still less their operation or their laws, but we know that they exist, and that at times in some mysterious way a sudden mania seizes upon a community and defies all reason and all prayer. The Middle Ages were full of such instances; later centuries have seen fewer of them, yet the "Convulsionnaires", and the fever for war, and our panics and revivals show that these forces are not dead." And thus the Theosophist, without being able fully to expound its method, shows a sufficient cause for phenomena before which science is silent, giving no clue to their prompting, their prevalence, or their periodicity.

But our observer descends from the contemplation of men *en masse* to that of men individually. Here the most striking differentiation is in degrees of intelligence. From the idiot to the genius there is an almost infinite gradation of mind; and not only so, but this is complicated with numberless combinations of taste, disposition, and principle. We see precisely the variety notorious in the animal kingdom, there being human snails, caterpillars, and oysters, human fishes, snakes, and toads, human geese, cats, and parrots, human horses, dogs, elephants, and monkeys, and, over all, intelligences lucid and strong, as far in advance of the cleverest dog as that dog is in advance of the oyster. When you attempt to think of these diversified minds as single projections from a creative act, beings without a past or a desert, the mere sportive manufactures of a Divine hand, your thought is palsied. The thing would be meaningless if it was conceivable. There are only three other explanations. One is chance,—but that is rejected because it contravenes the Law which allows no chance. The second is natural evolution, the spontaneous outgrowth of many forms in a seething Nature which abhors a vacuum. But this ignores the moral qualities combined with these intelligences, the self-restraint, the sense of justice, the unselfish aim which all experience shows to be not native but acquired. Acquired when? The theory is silent. The third is the Theosophic explanation. It says that every point along the line represents the development which the Ego gained in its past, and that its occupant is there because he worked up to it. The exquisite writings of a Frothingham or a Curtis mean that these men have struggled through the zone of mediocrity in time gone by, passed it, left it behind, are now on the mental plane they have earned and have the right to. Your coachman affiliates with his horses, understands them, finds his life in them, but he goes haltingly through the daily paper and enjoys only the sporting news

and the escapades. Why? Because he is still a horse in all but name, has feebly worked his way to his present era, and if in ages to come reaches the place where Frothingham is now. will not know that Frothingham is perhaps then a Planetary Spirit.

I do not mean to say that intelligence alone is the gauge to the progress of reincarnating humanity. This would be to ignore moral qualities, and we know from glad observation how many men there are whose intellectual make-up is contemptible, but whose noble natures compel our loving homage. Those natures mean Reincarnation and Karma just as truly as do the brains of others. It is in the combination of the two, the union in the one personality of such measure of mind and such measure of soul as we see, that gives us a clue to what has been done in past æons. And from this point of view how interesting is character! Each human being we meet, obscure, humble, insignificant as he may be, raises a speculation as to how and where he was last. I sit in an elevated chair at the street corner, nickel in hand, and watch the Italian as he polishes my shoes. I think of his nation's illustrious past and of its hopeful future; I see in him the genial good-nature, the responsiveness to kindness, which make that people the most fascinating on earth; I find that he is not stupid, yet that he can neither read nor write, and I know that he has no ambition for a finer calling aud will never attain to any. What was he in his last incarnation; what is there in this to advance the next? * * * I converse with my washwoman, good, honest, industrious, grateful, burdened with a husband who drinks and a son who loafs. She is garrulous and repeats much, but she has a moral fibre which is worth a crown, and for which a garret seems a poor reward. Where was she last; and what was it that dropped so true a soul into poverty and ignorance? * * * Some years ago, when assisting in an office of public utility, the errand-boy expressed to me his surprise at my closing the stove door to create a draft. He had always understood that drafts came down the chimney and descended through the coal, emerging through the lower opening into the room. I say to myself—not to him—"You are a good boy, truthful, faithful, trustworthy beyond limit. What did you do in your last embodiment that you are so inconceivably stupid in this?" * * * I have known a person so physically beautiful, so peculiarly loveable, that all hearts went out to him; and yet so false, so perfidious, so base, that there were few dishonors of which he was innocent, and none of which he was incapable. I query wonderingly, "How did you pass your last earth-lives? What was the merit that secured for you that extraordinary beauty, that singular loveableness? Why are you now so measurelessly vile?"

And thus we can take up every human being we meet, peering into his intellectual and moral traits, gauging what manner of man he is, and spec-

ulating as to his incarnations in the past. You will say that it is only speculation. Yes, in respect to era, race, personal condition, history, it must be; but there is not total absence of a clue. If he has great mental power, he must have worked up to it. If he has high and rich principles, he must have developed them. If he is unselfish and altruistic, he has not become so only in this life. On the intellectual or the moral line we can hardly postulate retrogression. and so we infer some degree of past merit and activity in any of those cases. So, too, we infer rightly from blessings possessed. Suffering means that there has been something to suffer for; health or wealth that each is justified by the past. Just what, we cannot say; it is the fact, not the details of it, which we are free to conclude. But even this is interesting. When I meet my companion, my servant, my tradesman, the acquaintance seen for an hour, then vanishing, I am not a seer to read his whole career in ages long gone by, but, if a Theosophist, I can measurably judge something of what he must have been and done. And, if a *true* Theosophist, I can study thus myself, noting the advantages which imply an ancient good, the deprivations which imply an ancient wrong, scoring up the sad weaknesses which show failure in self-conquest, the short-comings which have made this incarnation in many ways so undesirable, and which will ensure others that I would gladly change.

And surely here, I am applying Theosophy to the practical affairs of daily life.

NOTES ON DEVACHAN.

BY X.

(*Continued.*)

The Devachan, or land of "Sukhavati," is allegorically described by our Lord Buddha himself. What he said may be found in the *Shan-aun-yi-tung*. Says Tathagato: ". . . . . Many thousand myriads of systems beyond this (ours) there is a region of bliss called Sukhavati. This region is encircled within *seven* rows of railings, *seven* rows of vast curtains, *seven* rows of waving trees; this holy abode of *Arahats* is governed by the Tathagatos [Dhyan Chohans] and is possessed by the Bodhisatwas. It hath *seven* precious lakes in the midst from which flow crystal waters, having 'seven and one' properties or distinctive qualities [the seven principles emanating from the One]. This, O Saryambra, is the 'Devachan'. Its divine udambara flower casts a root *in* the shadow of *every earth*, and blossoms for all those who reach it. Those born in the blessed region are truly felicitous; there are no more griefs or sorrows *in that cycle* for them . . . . . myriads of Spirits resort there for rest, and then return to

their own regions. Again in that land, O Saryambra, many who are born in it are Ardivartyas, etc."

Certainly the new Ego, once that it is reborn (in Devachan), retains for a certain time—proportionate to its earth life,—a complete recollection "of his life on earth"; but it can never visit the earth from Devachan except in reincarnation.

"Who goes to Devachan?" The personal Ego, of course; but beatified, purified, holy. Every Ego—the combination of the 6th and 7th principles—which after the period of unconscious gestation is reborn into the Devachan, is of necessity as innocent and pure as a new born babe. The fact of his being reborn at all shows the preponderance of good over evil in his old personality. And, while the Karma [of Evil] steps aside for the time being to follow him in his future earth re-incarnation, he brings along with him but the Karma of his good deeds, words, and thoughts into this Devachan. "Bad" is a relative term for us—as you were told more than once before—and the Law of Retribution is the only law that never errs. Hence all those who have not slipped down into the mire of unredeemable sin and bestiality go to the Devachan. They will have to pay for their sins, voluntary and involuntary, later on. Meanwhile they are rewarded; receive the *effects* of the causes produced by them.

Of course it is a *state*, so to say, of *intense selfishness*, during which an *Ego* reaps the reward of his unselfishness on earth. He is completely engrossed in the bliss of all his personal earthly affections, preferences, and thoughts, and gathers in the fruit of his meritorious actions. No pain, no grief, nor even the shadow of a sorrow comes to darken the bright horizon of his unalloyed happiness: for it is a *state of perpetual "Maya"*. Since the conscious perception of one's *personality* on Earth is but an evanescent dream, that sense will be equally that of a dream in the Devachan—only a hundred-fold intensified. So much so, indeed, that the happy Ego is unable to see through the veil of evils, sorrows, and woes to which those it loved on earth may be subjected. It lives in that sweet dream with its loved—whether gone before or yet remaining on earth; it has them near itself, as happy, as blissful, and as innocent as the disembodied dreamer himself; and yet, apart from rare visions, the denizens of our gross planet feel it not. It is in this—during such a condition of complete Mâya—that the souls or astral Egos of pure loving sensitives, laboring under the same delusion, think their loved ones come down to them on earth, while it is their own spirits that are raised towards those in the Devachan.

Yes, there are great varieties in the Devachan states, and all find their appropriate place. As many varieties of bliss as on Earth there are of perception and of capability to appreciate such reward. It is an ideal paradise;

in each case of the Ego's own making, and by him filled with the scenery, crowded with the incidents, and thronged with the people he would expect to find in such a sphere of compensative bliss. And it is that variety which guides the temporary personal Ego into the current which will lead him to be reborn in a lower or higher condition in the next world of causes. Everything is so harmoniously arranged in nature—especially in the subjective world—that no mistake can be ever committed by the Tathagatos who guide the impulses.

Devachan is a "spiritual condition" only as contrasted with our own grossly material condition, and, as already stated, it is such degrees of spirituality that constitute and determine the great varieties of conditions within the limits of Devachan. A mother from a savage tribe is not less happy than a mother from a royal palace, with her lost child in her arms; and altho', as actual Egos, children prematurely dying before the perfection of their septenary entity do not find their way to Devachan, yet all the same, the mother's loving fancy finds her children there without one missing that her heart yearns for. Say it is but a dream, but, after all, what is objective life itself but a panorama of vivid unrealities? The pleasure realised by a Red Indian in his "happy hunting grounds" in that land of Dreams is not less intense than the ecstacy felt by a connoisseur who passes æons in the rapt delight of listening to divine symphonies by imaginary angelic choirs and orchestras. As it is no fault of the former if born a "savage" with an instinct to kill—tho' it caused the death of many an innocent animal—why, if with it all he was a loving father, son, husband, why should he not also enjoy *his* share of reward? The case would be quite different if the same cruel acts had been done by an educated and civilised person, from a mere love of sport. The savage in being reborn would simply take a low place in the scale, by reason of his imperfect moral development; while the *Karma* of the other would be tainted with moral delinquency. . . . . .

Remember, that we ourselves create our Devachan, as also our Avitchi, while yet on earth, and mostly during the latter days and even moments of our intellectual sentient lives. That feeling which is strongest in us at that supreme hour, when, as in a dream, the events of a long life to their minutest details are marshalled in the greatest order in a few seconds in our vision,[1] that feeling will become the fashioner of our bliss or woe, the life-principle of our future existence. In the latter we have no substantial being, but only a present and momentary existence, whose duration has no bearing upon, no effect nor relation to its being, which, as every other effect of a transitory cause, will be as fleeting, and in its turn will vanish and cease to be. The real, full remembrance of

1 That vision takes place when a person is already proclaimed dead. The brain is the last organ that dies.

our lives will come but at the end of the minor cycle,—not before. . . . . .

Unless a man *loves* well, or *hates* well, he need not trouble himself about Devachan ; he will be neither in *Devachan* nor Avitchi. "Nature spews the lukewarm out of her mouth" means only that she annihilates their *personal* Egos (not the Shells, nor yet the 6th principle) in the Kama-loka and the Devachan. This does not prevent them from being immediately reborn, and if their lives were not very, *very* bad, there is no reason why the eternal Monad should not find the page of that life intact in the Book of Life.

Brotherhood and Sex.

It will not be denied by any fairminded and intelligent person that the brotherhood of man includes also the sisterhood of woman. The same altruistic conception is applicable to both sexes. Advancement along this line means undoubtedly the real progress of the whole human race. It is not possible, however, that the two sexes should advance along parallel lines and that those lines, while tending in the same direction, should never touch each other, should never coalesce. It is not generally conceived that this one principle of brotherhood under the inspiration of altruism is also the key to the truest and highest relation of the sexes. The contrast is usually drawn between separation of the sexes, or celibacy, and the present association of the sexes, viz. animality; and all that is known of either of these conditions is far from satisfactory. No one imagines that in either condition the highest development for either individual is attained. The ideal perfection of either man or woman is not looked for either in any known monastic or social aggregation of individuals. Hence the question, Is marriage a failure?, has become a popular one for discussion. Most of the discussions upon the subject begin by ignoring the actual condition of things, show great ignorance of the real principles involved, and end either in confusion or despair of any real improvement. That selfishness is the real root of the trouble here complained of, and that the association of man and woman when really inspired by altruism is a very different thing indeed, lying as it does at the very foundation of every happy home, is not generally admitted because such relations are seldom seen.

Great as is man's selfishness in his lust for power and greed of gain, it never reaches its limits except in his relations to woman. Here the selfishness of man is supreme. Everywhere else the selfishness of man manifests method and shows design. He formulates an object, and works towards its accomplishment. But in his sexual life man is an unreasoning animal dominated by blind passion, and woman or wife is often his victim as is the

helpless animal in the claws of a tiger. His reason is sophistry, and his apparent kindness often only a snare.

The problem is by no means solved when, aware of all this, man deliberately turns his back upon woman and seeks in a life of celibacy relief from temptation.

The elements of an ideal life are not to be found except in the natural and existent. In our present condition man has need of woman, and woman has need of man. Each has something to give, to receive, and to learn from the other. The proof of this proposition is the fact that they find themselves thus associated, and that of the entire number of children born nature sees to it that there shall be no great disparity in numbers on either side.

If we are to follow the plain logic of Dame Nature, no man or woman has the right to live alone until the lesson is learned, and then living alone will be very different indeed from living for self.

When the animal instincts are simply suppressed, or stamped out, or, as is generally the case, burned out, man is in a very different condition from that in which these same gross elements are refined, elevated, purified, and preserved.

When the ancient writings declare that "In heaven the human being is neither married nor given in marriage, but is *as the angels*," and when mystics like Jacob Böhme represent the highest estate as sexless, these writers are seldom understood because the interpretation proceeds from the purely animal plane, while these writers speak from a different plane entirely.

The average condition of the man of the world in any sexual relation is satiety for individual woman, with the animal passion still unsatisfied, though perhaps restrained by law, by fear, or by religion.

In all true marriage, in any relation deserving the name of love, the condition is exactly the reverse; the animal is conquered and the true woman enthroned. This is the explanation of repeated marriages, of polygamy, and of concubinage; and in each of these cases human law generally ignores even nature, except the lowest animal life, to say nothing of the higher law and the divine life.

A great deal has been written and preached about "*Soul Mates*" and spiritual affinities. Most of such discussion is not only vulgar trash, but a great part of it arises from satiety on the animal plane, and is really an attempt to justify a change that shall by novelty renew the waning animal life. Stripped of all disguise, many such pleas are neither more nor less than lust masquerading in the holy name of love. What have pure animals incapable of one altruistic impulse to do with "*soul mates*" and spiritual affinities? One capable of spiritual affinity may find it as Christ did, by

lifting the Magdalen out of the slum of sin and despair into the light of a love that is pure beneficence and crowned with beauty and blessing. Those who prate most of soul-affinities often mean, when stripped of all disguise, to drag down a pure soul to their own animal plane.

The love of a true woman will redeem any man from the dominion of lust, who really desires to conquer himself. The love of a true man will elevate and glorify any woman who really feels her womanhood and aspires toward its highest realization. No marriage can be a failure where these opportunities are sought, and few marriages are so bad that they cannot thus be turned to account in the real life of the soul. Equal love, equal intelligence, equal wealth and social position fade into insignificance in the presence of equal opportunity.

If, instead of longing for conditions that do not exist and that are not likely to exist, people would take the conditions in which they find themselves and make the most and the best of these, they would often be surprised to find at last that these very conditions are the best that could have occurred to them. They would find that in working through these conditions every obstacle had been a help, and every inharmony a gymnastic of the soul. These are but the lessons of Karma; and true courage and true progress consist alike in subduing the environment, never in running away from it. The embryo adept who sits idly longing for other worlds wherein to display his power will find himself a fossil to be laughed to scorn and trodden under foot at last by any plebeian who passes that way. The plebian is an adept who finds in his surroundings opportunities, and who finds in his daily life an inspiration to better living and greater usefulness.

HARIJ.

MUCH READING, LITTLE THOUGHT.

The wise man sagely said that of making books there is no end. If true in his day, it is the same now. Among members of the Theosophical Society the defects are widespread, of reading too many of the ever coming books and too little thought upon the matter read. Anyone who is in a position to see the letters of inquiry received by those in the Society who are prominent, knows that the greater number of the questions asked are due to want of thought, to the failure on the part of the questioners to lay down a sure foundation of general principles.

It is so easy for some to sit down and write a book containing nothing new save its difference of style from others, that the pilgrim theosophist may be quickly bewildered if he pays any attention. This bewilderment is chiefly due to the fact that no writer can express his thoughts in a way that

will be exactly and wholly comprehended by every reader, and authors in theosophic literature are only, in fact, trying to present their own particular understanding of old doctrines which the readers would do much better with if they devoted more time to thinking them out for themselves.

In the field of every day books there is so much light reading that the superficial habit of skimming is plainly everywhere apparent, and it threatens to show itself in theosophical ranks.

So well am I convinced there are too many superfluous books in our particular field, that, if I had a youth to train in that department, I should confine him to the *Bhagavad-Gita*, the *Upanishads*, and the *Secret Doctrine* for a very long time, until he was able to make books for himself out of those, and to apply the principles found in them to every circumstance and to his own life and thought.

Those theosophists who only wish to indulge in a constant variety of new theosophical dishes will go on reading all that appears, but the others who are in earnest, who know that we are here to learn and not solely for our pleasure, are beginning to see that a few books well read, well analysed, and thoroughly digested are better than many books read over once. They have learned how all that part of a book which they clearly understand at first is already their own, and that the rest, which is not so clear or quite obscure, is the portion they are to study, so that it also, if found true, may become an integral part of their constant thought.

WILLIAM BREHON.

REPENTANCE.

I.

Repentance, if genuine, is the conquest of the spiritual over the animal, of the higher over the lower nature, the throwing away of sin, of carnal desire, and with that the corresponding assertion and elevation of the spiritual nature.

In it the Self must not be. With genuine repentance there must be nothing of self, no thought of well or ill being; it must be caused by no hope or fear of consequences.

With any such, it is but the expression in new form of the lower nature.

An action prompted by selfishness, by fear, or by hope, a sorrow for sin merely as it may be a cause of punishment or loss of pleasure, is not repentance.

For true repentance there must be no thought of consequences; it is alone the assertion of the higher nature, the expression of the spiritual and higher nature.

It must be the effect of the new light from the awakened spirit, new knowledge from the awakened sense revealing the meaning of the past, not fear, not hope ; this only is repentance. But the repentance that is merely regret that the pleasure is past, or fear of the consequences, is not repentance, only the sorrow of one who has spent his substance, who has drained his cups. True repentance is the feeling caused, not by the realization of the disadvantages of the results of sin, but by the realization of the true nature of sin, regret of sin as sin, apart from the effects, the lifting of the cloud from the higher nature, the seeing of sin in the light of higher knowledge. To one so repentant relapse is impossible ; the higher nature has spoken, has asserted itself, and can never again be silent. He is as one seeing by a passing light the corruption he is touching, and though the light may fade and pass from him, he can never through all time forget.

Salvation by repentance, Karma.

From life to life, through endless lives, the unceasing movement of men to greater heights, unceasing advance to perfect man, the greater and greater suppression of the lower qualities, the greater and greater development of the higher.

A sudden flash of light, the knowledge, realization of Truth, the turning in abhorrence of the higher man from evil, the casting away of the lower self, the ascent to a new height, the step nearer Nirvana.

The Salvation of Christianity is the Salvation of Karma. The salvation not by works, by actions, by outward appearance, but by the reality beneath, the judgment of the inner and real man,—shortly, the valuing of the character. Justification by faith, that is, award, not for the action, but for the motive, and the motive is but the expression of the character.

It is not alone against evil that Christ preached, but, too, the thinking of evil, reckoning the one as the other.

The deeds performed reckon not, save for the motives which moved them. The doer of good for his own advantage has benefitted not himself, only those receiving the good from him. Inasmuch as in the doing he but satisfied his own desires. Not the deed will be counted, the selfish motive alone.

II.

Be master of yourself, and I do not mean by that merely "Control the *expression* of your emotions and feelings", but I mean "Be so master of yourself that you can control not only the outward expressions, but the realities themselves." Recognize this—which is but an enlargement of the teaching that "Evil is Evil, though but thought"—that your thoughts and wishes, your desires, your emotions,—in fact, your state of mind, are actualities, entities, having effects as your actions have effects, though you

cannot see them or realize them, that a desire for evil has effects precisely as an evil action, though more confined to you.

The impure heart, though hidden under a guise of the highest morality, is still an impure heart.

A desire after evil, after immoral things, though you may never satisfy it, is equally abominable and injurious, though not to others, yet to yourself. Your judgment will be, not your actions, not your outward show, but *you*, yourself, a judging of your heart. Your question must be, not "What sins have I *committed*, but what *thought*? What manner of man am *I*? Do I, not alone *do*, but do I *think* evil?"

Remember that your Karma is as well the good and evil that you have thought, as the good and evil you have done; the separation of your principles means the separation of the qualities that are in you, in part.

Your fate rests not at all on what you have *done*, but on what you are; not on the outward appearance you presented on earth, but on the reality beneath.

Truly your actions, your outward appearance, may be of effect, but only indirectly, if at all. On the reality, on your true character, will eventually rest all, for as that character, so are the motives on which you acted.

The noblest actions count for nothing but for the quality of the motive inspiring them. If from a selfish or worldly desire, it will count for no more than an ignoble action so motived.

And from a vile heart cannot come a good motive.

Where an evil nature is, each evil thought increases it, gives it new strength; a vicious nature, though its desires are not satisfied, is yet worsened by each thought.

An intention, a desire, to do a generous action, though never carried into effect, is yet beneficial to you, will yet count to your credit. To a selfish nature such desire could not arise. The giver of charities for gain, for good repute, or what not, is even below him who gives not at all. Though he has done good, benefited others, yet it has not been for good, but for his own well-being.

The widow's mite received the praise of Christ as showing her devotion, for the intention displayed, and valuable above the gold of the rich which they missed not. Not in the gift, but in the motive of the giver, in the feeling displayed in the gift lay the good.

And further, the effects of mental states are as the expression outwardly. An evil thought once created is potential on self and also on others.

As one in an ill-temper, though silent, though not actively expressing it, will yet cause a certain discomfort to all, so each state of mind will affect others

The atmosphere is impregnated with it, and all coming into it, though

long afterwards, will be to a greater or less extent affected by it, though not consciously.

The ill-temper which disturbs those present will affect others long after it has passed away in the individual, and long after he has passed.

Though the effects are less apparent to us, still they are there.

Once evolved, they are as much realities as are actions, and not after a moment's thought can we think otherwise. That a thought can appear, arise to consciousness, and then pass out of existence, can but imply that it has no existence otherwise.

F. A. C.

The Sevenfold Constitution of Man.

In the second volume of the *Secret Doctrine*, p. 81, Mme. Blavatsky bids us remember that to some extent even the esoteric teaching is allegorical, and that to make the latter comprehensible to the average intelligence, symbols cast in an intelligible form must be used. And in *Esoteric Buddhism* Mr. Sinnett warns us against thinking of the higher principles as of a bundle of sticks tied together, or, in another view, of considering the different principles as being like the skins of an onion, to be peeled off one by one till we get to the innermost and best. It is said that one of the favorite topics of discussion in the mediæval Church was as to the number of angels that could find standing room on the point of a cambric needle. Human nature is the same always, and in every age of the world we have found it difficult to dispossess our minds of concrete conceptions and come down to abstract thought. We instinctively cling to some form of expression which materialises our idea, so to speak, and enables us to make a picture of it in our mind's eye ; and then, almost before we know it, we have accepted that picture as the thing it tried to symbolise. Men are always making to themselves graven images, and then bowing down and worshiping the images instead of the gods they endeavored to represent.

So it seems to me that our difficulty in getting at a clear idea of the seven-fold constitution of man lies mostly in the way we go to work ; that we fail to recognise, in the first place, that we are dealing with spiritual things, and that those things cannot be seen with the physical, nor even the intellectual, eye, and that the more we divide and subdivide, the more we define and consequently materialise our subject. This is most certainly a case where we need to generalise, and not to particularize, until we have arrived at the point where we are quite sure we are conscious that we are dealing with symbols and not with entities.

If we wish to get a general idea of Man, we may think first of the

body, as a thing which upon this material plane whereon we live we may call a tangible reality. Now a "tangible reality", though it can easily be proved to be the greatest of all illusions, is also the most material thing about us and the most widely removed from spirit; therefore we can set it aside, as do the Vedantin schools spoken of in the *Key*, p. 117, as not part of the spiritual man, or we can call it the lowest "principle" of our being. The material at one end of the scale involves the spiritual at the other, and we find on page 101 and 119 of the *Key*, *Atma* described as the Divine essence, which "is no individual property of any man", but "only overshadows the mortal; that which enters into him and pervades the whole body being only its omnipresent rays or light". "This ought not to be called a human principle at all" (p. 119).

We have, then, the body and the Spirit accounted for,—what remains is Consciousness, in its different phases. Upon p. 100 of the *Key* we read: "The 'principles' (save the body, life, and the astral eidolon, all of which disperse at death) are simply *aspects* and *states of consciousness*."

We realize a mood of intense desire or passion as something apart from our spiritual nature, and more akin to the physical; and we sometimes speak even of our "physical consciousness" as a thing that we do not therefore perceive with our senses. This is the lowest aspect of our consciousness, and is called in Sanscrit *Kama-rupa*, or "the body of desire." This is, of course, a highly figurative expression.

Then comes our intelligent consciousness, the Mind itself, the thinking part of us, which differentiates us from the brute; and we all realise that this aspect of our consciousness has a dual nature, and may drag us down to the level of the animal or raise us to the height of the god. Therefore we speak of the higher and lower *Manas*, or mind.

The physical body, its passions, and that lower aspect of mind which tends to gravitate downward and which belongs to the physical brain, are dependent upon *life*, or the vital principle, a form of the Divine Energy within us. So also is that phantom body, the shadow of the real one, which disperses after death like the light of a distant star, that to us appears to be still shining, although in reality long ago fallen from its sphere.

If we can imagine the lower aspect of our intelligence or mind tending downward, we can also realise its higher phase aspiring to unite itself to our spiritual consciousness or *Buddhi*, the vehicle of the Divine, of that Universal Spirit which makes us one. Our highest intelligence and our spiritual consciousness, overshadowed by the radiation of the Absolute, form the *Monad* or re-incarnating Ego.

Of this Madame Blavatsky says on p. 92 of the *Key*, that it alone can be thought of as the highest "principle in man". Because, as she explains, it is always the predominating element in man that counts, and in one man

passion is the ruling and foremost phase; in another, intellect; in another, spirituality.

But however we choose to arrange these phases in our minds, let us remember always that they are not entities, and that, as Mme. Blavatsky says, "There is but one *real* man, enduring through the cycle of life and immortal in essence, if not in form, and this is *Manas*, the Mind-man or embodied consciousness." (*Key*, p. 100.) K. HILLARD.

THE CYCLE OF 5,000 YEARS.

Quite unheeded, not only by those that are ignorant of the wise teachings of our Shastras, but also by the great body of my co-religionists—Hindus, who ought to know better, the great cycle of 5,000 years since the beginning of Kali Yuga is about to be completed. According to the calculations of our astrologers (who are also our astronomers), this is the 4992nd year of our Kali Yuga, so that there remain but eight years more to complete the cycle. It is written in our Shastras that Gunga will disappear or lose her influence on us after the first 5,000 years of Kali Yuga, and Vishnu 5,000 years later; our tutelary gods disappeared long ago. Now Gunga, as the wife of Shiva, is Kriya Shakti. The Light of the Logos is divided into the three parts (has three aspects rather) of ICHHA (Will), KRIYA (Powers of manifestation), and GNANAM (Wisdom). These three jointly carry on the work of Evolution during the Manvantaric period. They are the Shakti or energy of our three chief deities, Brahma, Vishnu, and Rudra, the Creator, Preserver, and Destroyer (Regenerator). Gunga is divided into three streams, which are again subdivided into seven, three pass eastward, three westward, and one—the seventh—south into India to the Southern Ocean. This single stream is itself the third of the whole.

In the *Theosophist* for October, 1886, there appeared an excellent and very suggestive article on Gunga, which may be read with this. The divisions of our "Mother Gunga" are taken from the Puranas, and its duration may be seen predicted years ago in our almanacs. In the second volume of the *Secret Doctrine* will be found the number of years that have elapsed since the commencement of Kali Yuga.

We are therefore about to witness the close of a very important cycle, and important changes, either seen and felt or unseen, are sure to follow. Well may therefore *Lucifer* say that the next few years will decide an important event in the history of this world, and men thenceforth would be either more material or more spiritual, let us fervently hope the latter.

In the meantime a great responsibility rests on the leaders of the Theosophical movement and their active co-workers; for the Society has become a powerful factor in moulding the minds of men, and unless it can stand the trial, its very existence may be a thing of the past. For after the Holy Stream disappears from our midst, it would be much more difficult to lift the heavy load of our Karma than it is now.

K. P. MUKHERJI, F. T. S.

Berhampore, India, March 13, 1890.

REMEMBERING THE EXPERIENCES OF THE EGO.

To many it seems puzzling that we do not remember the experiences of the Higher Self in sleep. But as long as we ask "Why does not the lower self remember these experiences", we shall never have an answer. There is a contradiction in the question, because the lower self, never having had the experiences it is required to remember, could not at any time recollect them.

When sleep comes on, the engine and instrument of the lower personality is stopped, and can do nothing but what may be called automatic acts. The brain is not in use, and hence no consciousness exists for it until the waking moment returns. The ego, when thus released from the physical chains, free from its hard daily task of living with and working through the bodily organs, proceeds to enjoy the experiences of the plane of existence which is peculiarly its own.

On that plane it uses a method and processes of thonght, and perceives the ideas appropriate to it through organs different from those of the body. All that it sees and hears (if we may use those terms) appears reversed from our plane. The language, so to say, is a foreign one even to the inner language used when awake. So, upon reassuming life in the body, all that it has to tell its lower companion must be spoken in a strange tongue, and for the body that is an obstruction to comprehension. We hear the words, but only now and then obtain flashes of their meaning. It is something like the English-speaking person who knows a few foreign words entering a foreign town and there being only able to grasp those few terms as he hears them among the multitude of other words and sentences which he does not understand.

What we have to do, then, is to learn the language of the Ego, so that we shall not fail to make a proper translation to ourselves. For at all times the language of the plane through which the Ego nightly floats is a foreign one to the brain we use, and has to be always translated for use by the brain.

If the interpretation is incorrect, the experience of the Ego will never be made complete to the lower man.

But it may be asked if there is an actual language for the Ego, having its sound and corresponding signs. Evidently not; for, if there were, there would have been made a record of it during all those countless years that sincere students have been studying themselves. It is not a language in the ordinary sense. It is more nearly described as a communication of ideas and experience by means of pictures. So with it a sound may be pictured as a color or a figure, and an odor as a vibrating line; an historical event may be not only shown as a picture, but also as a light or a shadow, or as a sickening smell or delightful incense; the vast mineral world may not only exhibit its planes and angles and colors, but also its vibrations and lights. Or, again, the ego may have reduced its perceptions of size and distance for its own purposes, and, having the mental capacity for the time of the ant, it may report to the bodily organs a small hole as an abyss, or the grass of the field as a gigantic forest. These are adduced by way of example, and are not to be taken as hard and fast lines of description.

Upon awakening, a great hindrance is found in our own daily life and terms of speech and thought to the right translation of these experiences, and the only way in which we can use them with full benefit is by making ourselves porous, so to speak, to the influences from the higher self, and by living and thinking in such a manner as will be most likely to bring about the aim of the soul.

This leads us unerringly to virtue and knowledge, for the vices and the passions eternally becloud our perception of the meaning of what the Ego tries to tell us. It is for this reason that the sages inculcate virtue. Is it not plain that, if the vicious could accomplish the translation of the Ego's language, they would have done it long ago, and is it not known to us all that only among the virtuous can the Sages be found?

EUSEBIO URBAN.

LITERARY NOTES.

TRANSACTIONS OF THE LONDON LODGE T. S., No. 15, is upon *Free-Will and Necessity in the light of Reincarnation and Karma*, and comes from the ever-delightful pen of Mr. A. P. Sinnett. His contention is that the old philosophical antagonists may be reconciled by considering Necessity as inherent in act and Free-Will as inherent in thought, what we do being inevitable from causes set in motion during prior lives, what we think being a product of that self-determining faculty which is inalienable from man as a free and responsible being. The theory is illustrated by two well-depicted cases, but will hardly sustain any close examination. For, if acts are the result of habits formed in the past, why are not also thoughts; and, if we are free to think as we elect, why are we not also free to act as we elect? More-

over, acts are the consequence of thoughts, illustrate, exemplify, embody them. We do not have a set of thoughts of one color, and a set of acts of another color; if we did, acts would be meaningless. Besides, if acts are the uncontrollable result of causes also beyond present control, punishment would hardly be just. Nor is it quite the fact, as Mr. Sinnett intimates, that the character of adults is the product of their early environment and training. Not infrequently, on the contrary, it is their revolt at both which moulds character into the sharpest contrast. Many Theosophists, for instance, have become such from disgust at the doctrines or the opinions or the selfish practices of their homes in youth.

If the last *Transactions* are less vigorous and cogent and clear, possibly more hastily written, than *The Higher Self* and some other predecessors, there is an admirable paragraph (page 3) on the various stages of consciousness, and pages 12 and 13 are delightful reading. The proof has been carelessly revised. (*Geo. Redway, 15 York st., Covent Garden, London; one shilling*). (Harris P.)

THE BUDDHIST is a weekly English paper published by the Colombo Branch of the T. S., Colombo, Ceylon, and devoted to the interests of the Buddhist religion, Its present editor is Mr. A. E. Buultjens, the young scholar at St. Thomas's College, Colombo, who, after many prizes and much distinction, was persecuted by the Warden of the College and by the Lord Bishop of Colombo because of becoming a Buddhist. Among its contributors are the High Priest Sumangala, the Prince of Siam, Sir Edwin Arnold, Mr. A. P. Sinnett, Madame H. P. Blavatsky, Col. Olcott, and Dr. F. Hartmann. Its object is to bring modern European thought into touch with real practical Buddhism, and to give the leaders of the Southern Church a channel through which their ideas may be directly communicated to the English-speaking world; while on the other hand it reproduces for the benefit of the Buddhists of Ceylon any indications of the current of European feeling on subjects of interest to them.

The Subscription is 10s. per annum or its equivalent for other countries than India. Address: Manager of "The Buddhist," 61 Maliban Street, Colombo, Ceylon.

TEA TABLE TALK.

There are many vacant seats at the Tea Table now; theosophy has not been able to keep the Professor nor the widow away from preparation for the summer vacations. Yet the dreamers and the doubters, together with the wise student, continue to have flashes of memory of the old discussions, and even with mere worldly matters to fill up their time, they meet strange "coincidences" now and then.

The Professor met me yesterday just as I rose from the Table and said,

"Julius, what a huge joke that word 'coincidence' is; what an excuse for ignorance of law."

"Why", said I, "what new event has aroused this tirade against a pet explanation of science?"

"Well, the other day I was talking with several friends who were saying

that they had difficulty in remembering certain things, and one lady said she could not remember any dates except one, but did not give that date. Just as she ceased speaking, my friend Urban, who was with me, said, 'Who can tell me the date of William the Conqueror?.' 'Why', said the lady, 'that is my only and sole date; how did you get it?' 'Oh', replied Urban, 'it just came into my head as you ceased speaking.' The lady's husband said it was 'only a coincidence,' whereupon we theosophists laughed."

"Well, Professor, what is the explanation?"

"Why, just what Urban said, it *came into his head* because the lady had it in her mind, and he seized the fleeting impression before it left him. These thoughts are communicated either as vibrations which act upon the other's mind, just as in the phonograph, or as pictures projected through the **astral light."**

M. writes that he had a singular coincidence like the first. He was talking to a young lady about going to Europe and meeting her there, and said, "You know, if I should go over there, I would learn to speak the language correctly, and, having acquired the proper accent, I would never lose it." The young lady, quite startled, said, "Why those are my exact thoughts!" **The Professor's explanation also meets this case.**

F., a correspondent, writes:

"I had a dream of two parts. In the first I was on a shining white road running between two banks which were covered with beautiful trees. On these banks were all the living people I had ever known, and all gathering brilliant flowers. In my mind rose the desire to have some, but, as I stooped to pick the flowers, they had disappeared. Disappointed, my friends tried to show me them, but a voice said, 'Come up here.' I went up and the voice bade me look for flowers, but I saw nothing save black moss. 'Look deeper,' said the voice. I parted the moss, and below were beautiful flowers, immortelles. Pleased, I returned and saw now the first flowers, but **with no desire to have them. What was this?"**

My answer is: It was a symbolical dream. The first flowers are the joys and ideas and delights of earth and worldly wisdom, the second are the flowers of the divine and higher nature; but those latter plants are covered with the moss which education and wrong theology or philosophy have made to grow over them. You must strike deep below this crust of error to get the flower that belongs to you and is immortal, and then you will no longer desire the others. This dream will be repeated under various forms until you obey **the injunction from your Higher Self.—J.**

Another sort of dream is that of K, who told it while we waited last night for a late friend. "I lost a diamond ring of great value and failed to find it after much search. That night I three times dreamed it was under the carpet in the parlor, at the corner of the mantel. Waking up, I went not dressed to the place, and there found the ring." This was the astral self searching in sleep for the ring, finding it, by the trail connecting it with the body, just as a dog finds his master, and then impressing it on the brain. This is easy to match. Readers ought to study the chapter on Dreams in the *Transactions of Blavatsky T. S.*, London.

JULIUS.

Suggestions for Branch T. S. Work.

QUESTIONS AND SUGGESTIONS RELATIVE HERETO CAN BE SENT CARE OF "PATH."

X.

STUDY OF SELF.

Theosophy constantly reiterates among other pieces of good advice the famous old maxim "*Know Thyself*". The subject was ably though briefly treated in the 10th number of *The Forum*, to which little pamphlet we commend our readers.

We are told that before we can hope for any perceptible progress on the Path, we must have made an exhaustive study of Self, yet we are given but meagre hints as to how this investigation is to proceed. This very fact, however, contains the whole theory of occult study and advancement as applied to human endeavor, for it is an inexorable Occult Law that you move upward by your own work, and that there can be no vicarious advancement. This shows how impossible it is for the adepts to reveal beyond certain limits, to do more than "strike the Keynote of Truth". We are given to understand that even pledged Chelas must work out from suggestive hints every fact and theory relating to the different phases of nature and Being required for them to know, and that anything in the nature of revelation is strictly un-occult. We must do our own work, perform our own thinking, and know for ourselves through ourselves. Hence the very first step necessary is self-study, and the first requisite, self-understanding or knowledge.

It is curious how little the average man knows of himself, and how little he thinks about it. Ask an hundred men if they are happy, and ninety-nine will reply, "Yes, of course"; ask them if they would live their lives over again just as they were, and hardly one would answer in the affirmative. Yet all claim by some queer process of reasoning or no reasoning at all, to be happy.

What business man now-a-days has time to think of his soul? Most of them have ceased to give the hour a week they formerly spent in church presumably in a higher frame of mind. They do not even analyse their ambitions, and continue in the rush for gold without any clear idea what they are going to do with it when they get it, except put it to make more.

Is it not seen how necessary it is to stop and think, and make some effort to realize the fruitlessness of the struggle in which we are nearly all of us engaged? Is it not obvious why occultism makes self-knowledge the first requisite of her pupils? Is a man fit to be trusted with important secrets and terrible powers before he has learned that any selfish use of them would be worse than useless? It is a great lesson to be learned, that

of rating the things of this world at their proper value, or, as the East puts it, escape from the illusions of Maya. It takes long and earnest introspection to reach this state, and is particularly hard for the Western mind, imbued as it is with the materialism of Western Science and the *laissez-aller* of the last few generations in all that relates to a higher life.

"To be done by as we do" is a good theory as far as it goes, but it does not go far enough. Yet this is all the religion of the majority of men, and is never or rarely lived up to, simple and insufficient as it is.

It is perhaps not possible to give any specific instructions how to conduct a study of self, for it must differ with each individual; but *The Forum* indicated one method of self-investigation which, if carried out literally and carefully, would be of great assistance to an earnest student. Another train of thought on such matters is that already hinted at in relation to the value of our present life or mode of life as we live it. How few of us would live over again willingly the experiences of the last ten or twenty years, and yet there is every prospect of the next decade being a repetition of the last in all but its minor features. There will be the same hopes unrealized, anxieties, troubles, worries, sorrows, and disappointments, and at the end of that time the same dissatisfaction with ourselves and our condition, and so it will always be until we recognize the necessity for a change and set about resolutely to accomplish it.

It is this frame of mind that every student of occultism must pass through; and upon the force and intensity of this realization depends the degree of his success.

It is penetrating the first veil of the Illusions of Maya, the Illusions which encircle us all and cause us to place such fictitious values on our surroundings. Conquer them, and we are one step nearer our great goal, *Nirvana*.

G. Hijo.

Theosophical Activities.

AMERICA.

MR. BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY'S TOUR.

Since the adjournment of the Convention on Monday, Apr. 28th, Mr. Keightley has been kept very busy. Tuesday ev'g, the 29th, he gave a parlor talk at a private house in Chicago. Wednesday the 30th he was occupied with friends who had engaged him for private interviews. Thursday, May 1st, private engagements, and a lecture before a society calling themselves "The Mystics." Friday, May 2d, meetings with the E. S. groups and a parlor talk in the evening. Saturday, May 3rd, a lecture to the Chicago Branch and a large company of invited guests. Sunday, May 4th, meeting with the E. S. groups, and a talk with the Ramayana Branch in the afternoon.

Monday, May 5th, spent the morning with friends who had come together for the purpose of asking questions and having an informal talk. In the evening was dined by persons interested in Theosophy, but not members of the T. S. He spent a pleasant and profitable evening, answering questions and clearing up many things which are very obscure to the beginner. Tuesday evening, May 6th, there was a meeting in Hyde Park attended by a large company, mostly non-Theosophists, to whom he gave an informal talk which included the answering of many questions. Wednesday evening, May 7th, a talk to a large company at the house of Dr. Phelon, Pres't of The Ramayana Branch.

Thursday morning, May 8th, he left us for Muskegon. We regret his inability to remain longer with us, as many persons who have hoped to hear him and have a talk with him have not been able to arrange to do so as yet. However, we are grateful for even this short visit, and congratulate the Branches and the friends to whom he goes.

Mr. Keightley left Muskegon Monday evening for Milwaukee, after a visit of three days, and we were thoroughly pleased, not to say delighted, with his visit.

Bro. Keightley is a worker, and within two hours after his arrival he was talking to a Christian Science class, where he plainly, but so kindly as to disarm antagonism, pointed out the danger and wrong of taking possession of another's mind.

In the evening he met the local Branch, and for over two hours answered all kinds of questions, metaphysical and personal.

On Sunday morning he met the Esoteric Section, and in the afternoon and evening he gave two public lectures to crowded audiences. In the afternoon he spoke of Theosophy and the Theosophical Society, and in the evening, of Karma and Reincarnation.

His audiences, afternoon and evening, were representative of the best intellect in the city, being largely taken from the professional and mercantile classes. The closest attention was paid and many questions asked.

Monday was spent receiving visitors and answering more questions, and on Monday evening a class of six school-teachers was formed, under the direction of our Superintendent of Public Schools, to study Reincarnation. We are also forming a class to study Du Prel's *Philosophy of Mysticism*, and from present indications it will be a large one.

When we extended our invitation to Bro. Keightley to come to Muskegon, it was with fear and trembing. We doubted if many people had ever heard of Theosophy or The Theosophical Society, and dreaded an empty hall. But the outcome has shown that there are many ready and anxious to listen to anything that may throw a little more light on the great problem of existence.

On May 15th Mr. Keightley reached Darlington, Wis. It is a town of only 2000 people and with but two F. T. S., yet over 100 persons attended the public meeting. The address was upon the organization and work of the Society, and upon some of the fundamental tenets of Theosophy. At the

close, questions were invited, and for an hour Mr. K. was busy in answering them. His visit undoubtedly aroused interest and gave rise to much inquiry. On the 16th he left for St. Paul, Minn.

ABSTRACT OF REPORTS FROM BRANCHES.

BROOKLYN T. S., which started with six members, enters upon its second year with a membership of fifteen. Regular meetings, open to visitors, are held weekly, and supplementary meetings every other week for Theosophists only. The average attendance during the past year has been twelve, and, as the subjects for discussion are arranged in advance, interest in the meetings is not only maintained but grows.

AURORA LODGE T. S., Oakland, Calif., was chartered in November, 1889, with eight members, and now has thirteen, with a prospect of several more shortly. Immediately after organization a commodious hall was hired, and for fifteen weeks an open meeting has been held each Sunday evening, whereat papers and addresses were given, followed by answers to questions. These meetings have been well attended, and the contributions have more than sustained them. Mr. Bertram Keightley made four addresses, each time to a large audience. The daily papers have used their columns freely, sometimes sending reporters, and large distribution has been made of leaflets. The library contains about forty books on Theosophy, and is much used. The regular Lodge meetings are held on the first and third Friday evenings of each month at the house of the Secretary. The Society feels greatly encouraged by the outlook, especially by the effect produced by the visit of Mr. Keightley, to whom it passed a very handsome Resolution of Thanks.

BANDHU T. S., Santa Cruz, Calif., was chartered in 1889, built upon the ruins, and with part of the material, of the old Purana Branch. Thus formed it could not be otherwise than defective. Some of its parts soon began to disintegrate and had to be replaced by new; others, not being securely cemented, have naturally fallen off. Yet on the whole there is ground for believing that our second year begins with brighter hopes of making Santa Cruz a center from which light may spread to many searchers for truth and knowledge. There has been a struggle for existence, but there is now no fear for ultimate results. We must succeed. A slight increase in membership has refreshed us, notwithstanding some losses. During the last six months we have held weekly meetings open to all interested, at which many original papers have been read and discussed. The meetings are not largely attended, but we are working up considerable interest, and during the coming season we shall try to have a public lecture once a month. Mr. Keightley's visit was invaluable in drawing attention to Theosophy, and we wish it could be repeated. So much good is accomplished by public lectures from eminent Theosophists that some organized system seems most desirable, and the advisability of establishing a Lecture Bureau might well be considered by Convention. We have only a small Library of twenty books, but it is free to all. There are nine members.

GAUTAMA, T. S., San Diego, Calif., is still in its infancy, just six months old, but its development in strength and vigor is an encouraging guarantee that its condition is promising, and gives hopes that its spiritual growth may not lag. In these six months the membership has increased from the original five to the present sixteen, with preparatory classes for new candidates. Great interest in Theosophical truths is manifested in San Diego, and the demand for literature is supplied gladly by our generous members. We have an excellent Library, the gift of members.

LOS ANGELES T. S., Los Angeles, Calif., has just passed its fifth birthday, but, counting its years by events, feels really very aged. Intelligently reviewing our experiences, both agreeable and painful, we find that not one has passed by without giving some new quality to our collective life. The very waywardness of untamed Californians leads them to act precipitately, perhaps unwisely, rather than drift with folded hands upon the Karmic sea. Within the last year there have been both additions and subtractions. Three demits were granted, and ten new members enrolled. Two have died. The Library has been richly increased by Mme. Blavatsky's and other standard Theosophical works, and is constantly used.

ARYAN T. S., New York City, has greatly prospered during the past twelve months, although deprived of the hall it has used for years, and in which, indeed, the Theosophical Society was originally formed. It has admitted twenty-two new members, demitted five to form the Brooklyn Lodge or to membership-at-large, and has a present roll of 72. The two principal events of the year have been the statutory Incorporation of the Society as a legal body, thus empowering it to receive bequests and to hold property, and the establishment of the "Aryan Reserve Fund", a plan looking to the eventual acquisition of commodious and permanent quarters, whereat inquirers can always find welcome and aid, and local work be concentrated. This will be in the residential section of the city, pertaining to the local Branch, and quite distinct from the General Headquarters in the business section and in charge of the General Secretary. The two departments especially fostered by the Aryan T. S. are the weekly meetings and the Library. The former are quite open to any one interested, and the attendance of non-members continually augments. There has never been a year so marked by original papers and by general discussion, both being promoted by the adoption of a schedule of consecutive topics. The Library now contains 296 books, as well as many pamphlets, and prides itself upon a complete set of the *Theosophist* bound. Volumes of *Lucifer* and the *Path* are bound to date. The Library, probably the largest in any Branch, is invaluable in attracting membership and in edifying it. Various activities of the Aryan Branch have been mentioned in the *Path*, not as displaying itself, but as stimulating to others. There is ample reason for the conviction that its growth during 1890 will surpass that of any past year. And much of its prosperity dates from the day when its meetings were made open.

SATWA T. S., Los Angeles, Calif., was chartered January 29th, 1889, with eight members. Ten members have been added, two have withdrawn;

one of these is Mr. James M. Pryse, who is now doing unselfish, excellent work in New York City. On November 5th, a unanimous vote of sympathy and loyalty to H. P. Blavatsky was passed. The visit of Bro. Keightley was of benefit.

GOLDEN GATE LODGE, San Francisco, has been steadily at work increasing its membership list and adding to the Library. Regular Sunday open meetings have been held, both in San Francisco and Oakland. Fourteen new members have joined since March, 1889; Mrs. Martha Bangle died in June, 1889: one member resigned from the Branch, but only to become an F. T. S. at-large. In October, 1889, eight members withdrew for the purpose of forming the Aurora T. S. at Oakland, to carry on work there. At this date we have 29 members and some applicants. The average attendance at the open meetings in a public hall has been 70 to 75 weekly; at some meetings 250 have attended. Original papers have been read at these, followed by questions and discussions, and the result has been a gain of new members. Three new T. S. Branches on this Coast have grown from this Lodge's efforts. The Branch Library is open to public use. During the year the Branch has paid to the Secretary and Treasurer of this section $56 50 for dues and fees, and $15 donation,—in all $71.50.

NARADA BRANCH T. S., Tacoma, Washington Terr., through the liberality of one of its members has obtained the use of room centrally located for headquarters. This will be shared with the Nationalist Club. The Library of the Branch will be placed in the headquarters, Theosophical literature will be for sale, and it is expected that much good will be derived from our having a headquarters. For the present the room will be open on Thursday nights and Saturday afternoons, but we hope soon to be able to use the room every day and night.

BALTIMORE, MD. The General Secretary visited this charming city. The five members-at-large there had secured the Hall of the Y. M. C. A. for the evening of May 7th, and had so well notified the public of the meeting that about 200 persons were present. Mr. Judge gave an account of the Society, its methods and mission, and especially expounded the doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation. He was rewarded with the closest attention and an evident interest, and one result of his visit is an application from the Baltimore members for a Branch Charter. Good report of the address was given by the local press.

WASHINGTON, D. C. From Baltimore the General Secretary proceeded to the Capital. The Blavatsky T. S. has recently rented a room at 1905 Penna. Ave. as Headquarters, and the Librarian, Captain Geo. R. Boush, a retired naval officer, generously devotes his time from 9 to 5 each day to its charge, receiving visitors and conducting the Library. This room and one adjoining were filled on Sunday evening, May 11th. A previous meeting of more private character had been held elsewhere on Saturday evening. The Blavatsky Branch has undergone much trial in changes of membership and in lack of financial strength, but a warm, earnest spirit of action has brought

out all its vitality, and it enters on a new era promising growth and power. No doubt the possession of a Headquarters will result, as has been the case elsewhere, in much larger public knowledge of the existence of the Branch, and a consequent extension of interest and membership. Mr. Keightley's expected visit will increase both.

HENRY W. CHEROUNY gave a lecture on Indian Theosophy before the "Gesillig Wissenschaftliche Verein" of New York City on May 8th to a very large and interested audience of Germans, mostly members of the above association and their invited friends.

The lecturer endeavored to give a general outline of the entire esoteric philosophy as laid down in the *Secret Doctrine* by H. P. Blavatsky. He began by stating that from time immemorial there existed in the East secret brotherhoods of devotees and sages, who spent their whole life in meditation and in the study of the secrets of nature, which resulted in the compilation of a profound system of philosophy and mysticism.

The speculations in Arthur Schoppenhauer's philosophy were shown to be contained in the Upanishads, and it was inferred that this great thinker had probably drawn largely from that source. The present movement of Theosophy by the Society of that name in America and abroad was inaugurated by H. P. Blavatsky, Col. H. S. Olcott, and W. Q. Judge, and has for its basis the doctrine of Universal Brotherhood, and in its philosophical construction —said the lecturer—many tenents which entitle it to the careful consideration of the most cultured and well-balanced minds, and in its metaphysical teachings can bear the most analytical and logical scrutiny.

After the lecture a short discussion followed, which however, revealed (at least among those who spoke) the prevalence of the materialistic tendency of the times, and a total unfamiliarity with this subject.

LOS ANGELES T. S.—At a recent meeting the subject of the "Astral Light" was taken up, and Miss Off read a very thoughtful paper thereon, as did also another member. Discussion followed. Mr. Nathan Platt, a visiting member from the Nirvana Branch, Grand Island, Neb., was to have read a paper on the same subject, but through a misunderstanding it was not called for, and he subsequently read it before the Satwa Branch.

The General Secretary has received an application for charter for a new Branch to be known as the *Hermes Council T. S.*, and to be located at Baltimore, Md.

INDIA.

The President-Founder, now that his staff has been enlarged by such competent aids as Dr. Daly and Mr. Fawcett, contemplates arranging a course of lectures at Headquarters upon Philosophy aud Psychical Science by these gentlemen. Col. Olcott and our Bro. Harte will lecture alternately on other topics. A program has been promised the PATH and will appear in due time.

EUROPE.

PHILALETHEAN T. S. was opened last month by Bro. G. R. S. Mead, Secretary to Madame Blavatsky, and promises well.

THE NEW "DEPARTMENT OF BRANCH WORK."

The following circular addressed to Branches will explain itself. It is proper, however, to state that the original plan, dictated by the need for economy, contemplated a division of the country into three Sections, the production upon a type-writer, by the multiple process, of three copies of a selected paper, and the transmission of a copy from Branch to Branch through each Section. But this was open to grave objections. There would always be danger of loss in the transmission, in which case all succeeding Branches would have no paper; complaints of dilatoriness in preceding Branches would be incessant; Branches would necessarily have to read the paper at their next meeting or forward it unread; and the last Branch in one Section would not receive the paper until 4 months after its issue. Besides, the General Secretary could not supply new Branches with back papers, and the Branches could not retain papers for future study or reference. Upon conference with several active Theosophists in New York, he was proffered aid towards printing the papers, and so the consent of the Executive Committee was obtained to the use of the General Fund. By the present arrangement a Branch retains its papers and can bind them in a volume from time to time, as well as circulate them among members absent from the meetings where they were read, and the General Secretary will be able to supply new Branches with complete sets from the beginning.

Every Branch is invited to forward for examination any paper which has been read before it and found pleasing. But it is well to state in advance that it is useless to forward papers which are common-place or incorrectly spelled. There are some hints on this subject in PATH for Sept. '89, page 192.

Into what this new Department may ultimately develop, cannot be now foreseen. But at present no papers can be furnished to individuals, nor at any time can unaccepted papers be returned unless postage shall have been enclosed.

To the President of the.....T. S.

DEAR SIR AND BROTHER:

I had not expected so soon to encounter the need to avail myself of the authority granted by the Convention to appeal to the Branches for a renewal of their subscriptions towards the expenses of the General Secretary's office; but a proffer of mechanical help towards one of several important schemes I have had much at heart has determined me to ask your aid thus early in the year. If the Branches respond at all liberally, I may be able to effectuate the others. The one now pressing upon me is expounded below, and will be known as the

DEPARTMENT OF BRANCH WORK.

The General Secretary has long been conscious of that deplorable waste by which valuable and interesting papers, once read at a Branch meeting,

are unused again, and has desired some arrangement making possible their circulation among other Branches, particularly among those weak in membership or in capacity for originating discussion. It is needless to enumerate the various difficulties, but a leading one has been the expense. He believes that the result of an organized and regular system of circulation will be threefold; 1st, to greatly extend the range of the best and newest Theosophical thought; 2d, to supply weak Branches with interesting matter for instruction and debate; 3d, to promote that attractiveness in Branch meetings which will make them sought by intelligent outsiders, thus giving the Branches a status in their communities, and tending to increase both their growth and influence.

Having secured the consent of the Executive Committee to the plan, he now purposes to print from time to time on the Aryan Press a selected paper, and mail a copy to each Branch. The number of papers issued will depend upon the amount of attention he and his aids can spare from the constantly-increasing work of the office, and also upon the funds placed at his disposal by the Branches and individuals. While no certain periodicity can be pledged, it is thought that a bi-weekly issue will prove practicable.

If the plan commends itself to your Branch, I invite you to apprise me what contribution, if any, it can make towards the expenses of the General Secretary's office during the present fiscal year. It must be distinctly understood that any Branch desiring the papers will be supplied with them, whether contributing financially or not, it being not doubted that the stronger Branches will feel it their privilege to assist the more liberally because there are weak Branches really unable to give at all. As the summer season is that wherein most time can be found for effectuating much of the work involved, I shall be glad of as early a reply as you can make.

Very truly and fraternally yours,

WILLIAM Q. JUDGE,
Gen. Sec'y.

NOTICES.

I.

The Report of the Convention of 1890 has been sent to every F. T. S. in the American Section, and with it has gone *Forum No. 11* to each Branch member and to each member-at-large who has paid his dues for 1890. In consequence of the greatly increased size of the Report this year, the price for single copies has necessarily been raised to 25 cts. It has 94 p.p.

II.

Information from India shows that the treasury at Headquarters is again depleted, and the General Secretary cordially commends to any American Theosophists who have the means for even a small donation the

great need to sustain the staff there at work. Last year's contributions were most generous ; let us not abate them. Any will gladly be forwarded by the General Secretary.

III.

The J. W. Lovell Co. have just issued Dr. F. Hartmann's *Talking Image of Urur*, the story which appeared as a serial in *Lucifer*. In paper it is 50 cts., in cloth $1.00. Orders may be sent to the PATH.

IV.

The demand for the "Glossary" has been so satisfactory that it has been found necessary to issue a second edition, which has been bound in cloth as well as paper. Cloth, 75 cts. Paper, 50 cts.

V.

The PATH has received a further supply of Nizida's *Astral Light*. After considerable and vexatious delays *Gems from the East* has at last arrived from London and is now in the hands of the binder. It has come so late that a review is not possible in this issue. The arrangement permits of the writing of autographs opposite the selection for each day. The verse for January 31 is, "Put yourself frankly into the hands of fate, and let her spin you out what fortune she pleases." The print is done in blue and there are vertical side-pieces on every page in brown. Parchment paper cover. Title on cover in black and red.

In Memoriam.

MRS. KATE S. SHERBURNE, F. T. S.

March 20th, 1890.

OM

May the Soul of Our Beloved Departed be at Peace and Liberty.

—LOS ANGELES T. S.

Shining Venus trembles afar, the Earth's Higher Self, and but with one finger touches us.—*Text in Rock Temple.*

OM.